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AUTHOR Sniegoski, Stephen J.
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ABSTRACT

This report focuses on the career of Ulysses Grant appointee John Eaton, the U.S. Commissioner of Education from 1870-1886. Eaton inherited an impoverished Bureau of Education, an autonomous, non-Cabinet level department. The Bureau's only influence to promote education in the states was the collection and diffusion of statistical data. Eaton began to build the reputation of the department by working closely with professional education associations, most notably the National Education Association (NEA), and building amicable relations with the U.S. Congress. Eaton was able to publish and distribute to the public a variety of circulars of information on several subjects. In addition, Eaton made a library in the Bureau a permanent collection of works on education, along with a museum of "educational appliances," which was disbanded in 1906 due to maintenance costs. Eaton developed a systematic method of collecting educational statistics with the cooperation of state school officials. The first systematic program of exchanging education information by the U.S. government with foreign countries was begun. This report chronicles the many contributions of John Eaton to the field of public education and to the federal post of Commissioner of Education. (EH)

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ED 386 411

JOHN EATON, U.S. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, 1870-1886

Stephen J. Sniegoski

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In 1867, Congress passed legislation creating an education agency in the federal government--an autonomous, non-Cabinet level Department of Education. The Act set forth the purposes of the Department as those of "collecting such statistics and facts as shall show the condition and progress of education in the several States and Territories, and of diffusing such information respecting the organization and management of schools and school systems, and methods of teaching, as shall aid the people of the United States in the establishment and maintenance of efficient school systems, and otherwise promote the cause of education throughout the country." The Department, thus, was essentially an information office.[1] It could promote education only by making its information available to the states; it did not have the authority to enforce any national system of education. Nevertheless, the Department's supporters maintained that it would, by means of persuasion, induce vast improvements in the country's schools.[2]

The first years of the federal education agency were beset with difficulties. The Commissioner of the new agency, Henry Barnard--one of the leading American education figures of the nineteenth century--focused on the development of visionary schemes and erudite educational studies, but did little to convince Congress of the usefulness of the office. By early 1870, when Barnard resigned as Commissioner, Congress had downgraded the education office's status to that of a bureau within the Department of the Interior and had cut its appropriations from $15,000 to $6,000. When Barnard's successor, John Eaton, took office in March 1870, the federal education agency seemed on the verge of extinction.[3]

Eaton was born in rural New Hampshire in 1829. He attended local schools and worked his way through the Thetford (Vermont) Academy and Dartmouth College, graduating in 1854. After graduation, he held a series of school administration positions in Ohio. In 1859, he entered Andover Theological Seminary to study for the ministry. Ordained as the Civil War broke out in 1861, Eaton entered the Union army as a chaplain with the 27th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, which served under Major General Ulysses S. Grant. In 1862, General Grant assigned him the task of

organizing and caring for the myriads of escaped Black slaves who were streaming to the Union lines. Eaton's success in this trying endeavor, in which he developed a lasting friendship with Grant, led to his being made a brigadier general in charge of the Army's freedmen's department. One of Eaton's major objectives was the establishment of schools for the freed Blacks. With the creation of the Freedmen's Bureau in 1865, Eaton became one of its assistant commissioners. He remained at this post for less than a year, resigning in December 1865 and returning to Memphis, Tennessee, where he had previously directed the army's work for the freedmen.[4]

In Memphis, Eaton started a newspaper devoted to the Radical Republican cause. In 1867, he was elected superintendent of schools for Tennessee and organized a system of statewide school supervision. There was considerable white resistance to public education and Reconstruction in general in Tennessee, and Eaton was excoriated as a northern "carpetbagger." Realizing that his reelection in 1869 was unlikely, Eaton went to Washington to seek a federal position from the now-President Grant. Grant appointed Eaton Commissioner of Education with the hope that he could save the Bureau of Education.[5]

Eaton lacked Barnard's lofty reputation in education circles, but he was an adept administrator who had the political savvy to deal with politicians.[6] Upon taking office in March 1867, in quarters "so crowded with books, pamphlets, and desks as to be wholly unfit for successful clerical work,"[7] Eaton immediately set out to improve the image of the Bureau. In contrast to the aloof Barnard, Eaton established cordial relations with individual members of Congress, inviting them to visit his office. His relations with Congress were naturally enhanced by his loyalty to the Republican Party, the prestige of his Civil War military rank, and his friendship with President Grant.[8]

Eaton also worked closely with professional education associations, especially the National Education Association (NEA), which came into being in 1870. The Bureau distributed NEA publications under its franking privilege, and Eaton helped to plan NEA meetings. In turn, the NEA gave strong support to the Bureau. At nearly every NEA meeting, resolutions were passed strongly commending the work of the Bureau, often requesting increased appropriations and sometimes the restoration of Cabinet-level status. The NEA also gave vigorous backing to

John Eaton himself. In 1877, 1881, and 1885, when new presidents were preparing to take office, the NEA campaigned for Eaton's retention in office.[9]

Barely eight months after entering office, Eaton submitted to Congress the annual report for 1870, which was mandated by the 1867 legislation. Briefer than Barnard's first annual report and with a greater emphasis on contemporary affairs, Eaton's report was eminently more readable to the general public. Although a few members of Congress were annoyed by the report's unflattering accounts of education in their states, the work was generally well-received. Congress approved the printing of an additional 20,000 copies and doubled the appropriations for the Bureau. Largely as a result of Congress' favorable reception of Eaton's 1870 report, the threat of the federal education agency's early demise vanished. And despite being part of the Department of the Interior, the Bureau was able to function with considerable autonomy.[10]

Although Eaton better oriented the office's activities to the interests of members of Congress, in the main, he followed Barnard's general outline for the agency. Eaton's annual reports, the Bureau's major publication that was distributed

gratis to the public, ran around 1000 pages in length. The annual reports included extensive statistical surveys, summaries of educational conditions in the various states, and descriptions of contemporary school practices. This was the first time that most of this information was available to the public.[11]

Barnard had envisioned the production and widespread dissemination of numerous tracts and reports on specific educational subjects, but a hostile Congress refused to provide any funds for their publication.[12] In more favorable circumstances, created largely by his own efforts, Eaton was able to have published 65 circulars of information on a variety of subjects--training of nurses, maternal schools in France, school discipline, rural architecture.[13]

Eaton also made permanent a library in the Bureau that gained renown for its collection of works on education. Henry Barnard actually had created a library for the federal education agency, which largely consisted of his own collection of education books. These books, however, remained Barnard's personnel property. In his first annual report, Eaton described Barnard's collection as "the most complete in the country" which "should unquestionably be purchased by the government for the

permanent use of the office."[14] The Bureau purchased Barnard's collection, paying him in small amounts from year to year as warranted by the funds available.[15]

Barnard's collection provided a nucleus for the library, which would expand to over 18,000 books and 47,000 pamphlets when Eaton left office.[16] As early as 1873, Eaton would write that the Bureau's library had become the "most valuable pedagogic library in the country."[17]

Eaton also created a museum of "educational appliances" in conjunction with the library. Eaton held that "the sight of the plan of a building, or of an article of educational apparatus, will furnish a basis of judgement more correct than could be obtained from any description in words."[18] The museum included portraits and busts of important educators, models of school buildings, and various teaching aides--object lesson cards, science teaching charts, kindergarten materials--representing the newest technological developments in education. The artifacts were not simply kept in the Bureau's Washington office but were exhibited at national and international exhibitions, such as the Vienna Exhibit of 1873, the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, the Southern Exposition of 1884 in Louisville, and the

World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition of 1884-85 in New Orleans. As a result, the Bureau gained exposure to people outside of education circles. The museum remained an integral part of the Bureau until 1906 when it was disbanded because of high maintenance costs.[19]

An especially important contribution of Eaton's was his creation of an orderly method of collecting educational statistics. Lacking the authority to require school officials to provide information, or the funds actually to pay them, Eaton found ways to win their cooperation, such as providing cooperative officials with free Bureau documents. A reliable procedure for securing information developed. The policies of data collection originated by Eaton continued to be used for decades after his departure. The Bureau's collection of statistics encouraged local and state officials to maintain accurate records and to adopt uniform schedules for reporting school data. Eaton's effort to obtain statistics demonstrated not only his resourcefulness, but also his adeptness in creating a network of support for the Bureau in the many school officials who now had some direct contact with it.[20]

Eaton also was concerned with international education. Each of Eaton's annual reports contained at least one chapter devoted to education in foreign countries. The Commissioner's report for 1872, for example, discussed the educational systems in 30 foreign countries. A number of circulars of information also dealt with education in foreign countries--France, Spain, Germany, Argentina, Portugal, Japan, China, among others.[21]

The Bureau of Education additionally engaged in extensive foreign correspondence. Like many American leaders since the birth of the Republic, Eaton believed that the United States had a mission to spread its democratic system worldwide. "We say to all the world 'this is the better way,' and invite the nations to walk therein." Foreign leaders, Eaton claimed, wanted to copy American society, and they recognized correctly that "the sources of American greatness are to be found in our education."[22] Before the creation of the federal education office there had been no federal agency to meet the educational interests of other governments. Thus, Eaton started the first systematic program of exchanging educational information by the United States government. Many foreign countries--Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Egypt, South Africa, Japan--requested

advice from Eaton.[23] France, in 1878, created a bureau of educational information modeled after the U.S. Bureau of Education.[24]

Eaton viewed his office's function as involving education in the broad sense, not just the schools. As he rhetorically asked in his first annual report: "Why should it [education] be limited to what is done in the school room or the curriculum of the college, or of professional and industrial schools? Why should not every parent feel that the education of man here begins with the cradle, and every citizen carry with him the conviction that it ends with the grave, and shape American education so as to comprehend those limits in every life, and enable it to reach the highest possible attainments?"[25]

Eaton's broad view of education was reflected in his interest in libraries, which he saw as an extension of the formal educational system.[26] Eaton gathered statistics on libraries and devoted a small section of each annual report to that subject, on which little had been published previously. This data engendered requests from librarians and other interested parties for more extensive information, not solely on statistics, but on proper procedures for cataloguing, collecting, and other library

activities for which there were no accepted guidelines at the time. In response to these expressed needs, Eaton, in 1874, decided to prepare a separate report on libraries that would include a more complete listing of library statistics than had been previously compiled for the annual reports, along with articles on various library subjects. Originally intended as a routine circular that would be ready for the printer in early 1875, the report quickly evolved into a much larger project, which lengthened the time for its completion.[27]

Eaton corresponded with Justin Windsor, Superintendent of the Boston Public Library, on the proposed report. Eaton sent Windsor a list of the topics to be included in the report. He urged Windsor to select one or two topics for himself and to recommend other potential contributors.[28] Eaton promised the contributors that the Bureau would pay them $8 to $10 a printed page. (This would be a significant supplement to a librarian's salary.)[29] In the end, Eaton found 35 contributors for the work. Eaton chose his chief clerk, Samuel R. Warren, who had already organized the library statistics in the annual reports, to be the chief editor of the work. Warren was assisted by S. N. Clark, temporarily employed by the Bureau.[30]

Warren and Clark gathered the statistics and prepared the work for the printer, but Eaton himself played the major role in shaping the actual contents of the report. He not only suggested many of the topics but offered strong suggestions as to what should be the desired conclusions. Sometimes he provided the data that formed the source of the article. Reviewing the papers, he often returned them with recommendations for changes and additions.[31]

It took over two years to prepare the report and required an enormous correspondence with nearly all the librarians in the country. In this process, the Bureau served as a vital link in communication among the many isolated librarians. The Bureau's activities helped to forge the necessary community spirit among librarians that paved the way for Melvil Dewey and other library leaders in setting up a meeting of librarians at the Centennial celebration in Philadelphia in October 1876, out of which emerged the American Library Association.[32]

The Bureau not only helped to foster the necessary community spirit, but Eaton was one among a number of individuals to suggest the meeting of librarians. Such a meeting, Eaton believed, would be an ideal forum in which to publicize the

library report.[33] At Eaton's suggestion, the Bureau offered the official call for the librarians' meeting.[34]

The library report was released on August 31, 1876, and was publicly displayed in the fall of 1876 at the Bureau's exhibit at the Centennial celebration in Philadelphia. Copies were also circulated at the October meeting of librarians in Philadelphia.

The report was entitled Public Libraries in the United States of America: Their History, Condition, and Management. It consisted of two volumes, one much longer than the other. The first consisted of 1,187 pages. About one half of this volume provided a history of libraries. Another quarter consisted of library statistics. The remainder discussed managerial aspects of librarianship--cataloging, classification, indexing, and the preservation and binding of periodicals.[35] The second volume, 89 pages in length, with an additional title Rules for a Printed Dictionary Catalogue, was authored by Charles A. Cutter. It was the first published set of rules for library cataloguing, and thus was a milestone in the development of the modern library.[36] Equally far-reaching was Chapter 28, "Catalogues and Cataloging," in the first volume in which Melvil Dewey introduced his Decimal

Classification system.[37] All in all, the report provided a veritable bible for the nascent library profession.[38]

Eaton ordered 10,000 copies of the report to be printed and sent gratis to every library mentioned in the report. Leading foreign libraries and many interested individuals were also on the mailing list.[39]

The report was praised highly in the library community. The editorial in the first issue of Melvil Dewey's American Library Journal stated: "It is not too much to say that this volume is the most valuable and practically useful work specifically devoted to libraries that has been published in any country."[40] The report was also reviewed extensively by the general press--reviews that Eaton avidly solicited. The Chicago Tribune, for example, wrote that "no publication so thorough, practical and exhaustive on the subject of libraries . . . has ever appeared in this country or Europe."[41] Probably, no other library report has been given so much attention by the non-library press.[42] It was also the first Bureau production to receive widespread favorable attention. And the attention given the publication enhanced the prestige of the Bureau of Education, just as Eaton had hoped. As the theology journal Bibliotheca Sacra contended: ["Scholars,

philanthropists, statesmen and patriots will urge upon Congress generous appropriations for this bureau, to enable it to complete the projected series of special reports on different phases of our education, of which this is the first."[43]

Eaton's support of libraries did not cease with the events of 1876. Eaton included supplements to the 1876 statistical data in his later annual reports, with the 1884-1885 report having a fully revised library census. Eaton also issued circulars of information on college libraries, library buildings, and general library aids, each of which written by prominent librarians. By the end of his administration, Eaton had fashioned a pattern of cooperation between the federal education agency and the library profession that would continue to the present.[44]

Eaton used his position as a bully pulpit to promote public education. His views reflected the conventional outlook of the leaders of the nineteenth century public school movement.[45] America's republican form of government, Eaton maintained, made education an imperative. "The security and perpetuity of our institutions rest so exclusively on the individual choice, that reason, conscience, and the high sentiments of every soul should be brought into play and properly informed."[46] In Eaton's view,

however, education could not simply be a matter left to the private sector or even to local governments. Eaton saw the United States as divided by class, ethnicity, religion, and politics. Such diversity troubled Eaton because it seemed to threaten national unity, a goal that the United States had recently fought a bloody war to preserve. National unity, as Eaton saw it, demanded a national culture, and the public schools were the best vehicle to secure that end.[47] "As the only agency by means of which these divers peoples can be molded into a homogeneous population, having the unity of ideals, purposes, aspirations, and patriotic sentiment which make up national life, the schools are emphatically a national institution."[48]

Eaton did not perceive the promotion of a national culture as constituting the suppression of sectional, religious, or ethnic subcultures.[49] Rather, he defined the issue as simply one of reason overcoming ignorance. A national culture was dictated by reason; divisiveness, in contrast, was inflamed by prejudice and passion. To Eaton, "a mass of ignorance is always a temptation to the designing and evil." [50]

Eaton was especially concerned about education in the South. Public school systems had not taken hold there prior to the

Civil War as they had in the North. To the advocates of the public school, the South was an area of backwardness and ignorance.[51] Eaton attributed the Civil War to "differences in systems and methods of education in the different sections."[52] The introduction of the northern system of public schools in the South, Eaton believed, would be the cure for sectional strife, and he strove unceasingly to achieve this result. As an early historian of education, Amory Dwight Mayo, would write about Eaton: "For more than twenty years, from 1862 to 1882, no man in the United States contributed more to the final establishment and increasing importance of the common school system of the South than he."[53]

During the economic depression which gripped the country in the 1870s, Eaton's envisioned the likelihood of social conflict that it would be necessary for the public school to forestall. "Indeed, it may be doubted whether we have sufficiently reflected upon the enormities possible in our communities if the systematic vagrancy of the ignorant, vicious, and criminal classes should continue to increase."[54] Eaton adhered to the nineteenth century liberal belief that capital and labor had common interests. Education would enable students to "come to see that

there is no necessary antagonism between these fellow-workers, for the interests of the laborer rest everywhere upon capital, which is nothing but the sum of surplus labor, and that capital is vitally interested in the improvement, intelligence, and prosperity of the laborer."[55]

Eaton emphasized that education enhanced the economic productivity of laborers and consequently increased their wages.[56] Education also provided workers with realistic expectations. "Those able to read the facts are not apt to be so unreasonable in their demands nor to engage in strikes; but, knowing the markets, know that increase of wages at a given time is impossible."[57]

Given the manifold benefits of public education, Eaton held that "opposition to it from any quarter becomes well-nigh unaccountable."[58] He recognized, however, that such opposition not only existed but was widespread. "Every generation of adults, in every part of the country, in reference to the education of all the children in their midst, has, so far, in some form, to some extent, doubted, hesitated, presented difficulties, or shown hostility."[59] It was imperative that "Every generation of adults needs to be thoroughly indoctrinated

with the sentiment of universal education."[60] Eaton saw the Bureau of Education performing this indoctrination function. Yet even such an effort was not enough to advance public education in the United States. "Something in the way of pecuniary co-operation is imperatively demanded."[61]

Eaton actively supported federal financial aid to education. In 1871, Eaton was one of the first advocates of federal aid to recommend that the funds be derived from land sales. Federal aid funds derived from land sales would become a key provision of various federal aid bills debated in Congress during the 1870s.[62] Eaton stressed that such aid would not supplant the local effort, and he put forth the concept of "matching" funds that would later be embodied in numerous federal aid programs. "No interference with local rights is suggested. But the offer of pecuniary aid to the amount of ten or fifteen thousand dollars for each congressional district, on condition that a certain amount shall be raised by local means, and free common schools be opened for the benefit of all, would constitute a motive which would stimulate the friends of education in those communities, so as to render well-nigh universal the sentiment in favor of such schools."[63]

Eaton lobbied on behalf of the several aid to education bills that came before Congress during the 1870s and 1880s. None of these bills became law, but a number of times federal aid bills passed in the Senate only to be blocked by the House.[64] It was not until after World War I that congressional support for federal aid to education would again approach this level.[65]

In his desire to forge national unity through education, Eaton did not exclude the education of racial minorities--Asian, Black, Indian, native Alaskan. Many American communities not only did not allow these groups to attend schools for whites, but also refused to create any separate schools for them. As Eaton wrote in this first report: the "proscription of races" in schools demanded "the attention of the nation."[66] Eaton was sympathetic to the plight of these minorities, but his arguments focused on the benefits to be derived for the whole community. In short, the schooling of minorities was in the enlightened self-interest of the white majority. Many American communities, however, had "yet to learn that they cannot afford to allow any one, however alien to their own race, to grow up to be ignorant."[67]

Only in regard to the education of Alaskan natives could Eaton go beyond verbal support. The United States had purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867 but had left the faraway territory unorganized and largely ignored for over 10 years. The major figure in arousing political interest in Alaska was Sheldon Jackson, a Presbyterian missionary and later employee of the Bureau of Education. After a visit to Alaska in 1877, alleviating the plight of the Alaskan natives became Jackson's life's devotion. And he worked unceasingly to have Congress establish some form of government and public educational system for Alaska. As Alaska's foremost lobbyist in Washington, Jackson developed close ties with various members of Congress and the executive branch, especially with John Eaton, who was likewise a Presbyterian. On March 2, 1882, Jackson delivered an address advocating a government and an educational system for Alaska before the Department of Superintendence of the NEA. The address was printed by the Bureau of Education in Circular of Information No. 2, 1882. 60,000 copies were produced and distributed. Teachers from around the country provided thousands of petitions to members of Congress urging them to pass legislation on Alaska.[68] This activity spurred Congress to pass the Alaska

Organic Act of 1884 that organized Alaska as a federal district. Included in the legislation was a provision charging the Secretary of Interior with the responsibility for directing public education in Alaska. The Secretary assigned this task to the Bureau of Education in 1885. Sheldon Jackson became the General Agent for Education in Alaska.[69]

Eaton saw the vital need to assimilate the Alaskan natives into American commercial society as self-dependent, fully-functional members. The danger, Eaton believed, was that the Alaskan natives would be seduced by civilization's vices and become dependent on state welfare. Public schools were the key to the Alaskan natives' salvation. "If schools are promptly established and the people taken as they are, and by well-fitted, skillful education advanced in intelligence, and virtue, and skill in the industries by which they now live, and in ability to improve themselves within their present environment, it can hardly be doubted that they will not only continue self supporting, but that they will contribute vastly more to the commercial profits of the country. If, on the other hand, their education is neglected and the vices of civilization go before its virtues, the evils to be expected can hardly be described,

nor would it be possible to foretell the expense likely to be incurred in preserving order and establishing peaceful commercial relations."[70]

The Alaska program, in which the Bureau would actually be running schools, was the first time the Bureau moved beyond its informational functions as specified in its 1867 legislation. The Alaska program would become a large, though isolated, portion of the Bureau of Education, comprising about two-thirds of its total staff and expenditures in the 1910s and 1920s. The Alaska program was transferred to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1931.[71]

In March 1885, Grover Cleveland was inaugurated president. Cleveland was the first Democratic president since the Civil War. In November 1885, Eaton submitted his resignation due to ill health and a desire to accept the presidency of Marietta College in Ohio. At Cleveland's request, Eaton remained in office until a replacement could be found. It took nine months before Cleveland announced a successor. During this time, Eaton moved his family to Marietta, Ohio, and made only infrequent trips back to Washington.[72]

Eaton served as president of Marietta College until 1891, when he suffered a stroke. He returned to private life, but remained involved in various learned societies. In 1899, Commissioner of Education William Torrey Harris appointed Eaton Inspector of Schools for Puerto Rico, which the United States had just acquired from Spain as a result of the Spanish-American War. Eaton only stayed at this position for a short time, deteriorating health forcing him to resign on May 1, 1900. Eaton spent the final years of his life writing his memoirs of the Civil War years. These appeared posthumously as Grant, Lincoln, and the Freedmen. Eaton died on February 9, 1906, and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.[73]

Throughout Eaton's term of office as Commissioner, he pushed for greater appropriations for the Bureau. Appropriations increased significantly, although not so much as Eaton believed necessary to effectively carry out the Bureau's work. The first appropriation for the Bureau made while Eaton was Commissioner was $14,500, more than double the amount of Barnard's last year. By 1876, appropriations exceeded $41,000, but the effect of economic depression caused reductions in the Bureau's budget, declining to around $35,000 in 1880. The 1880s saw an upswing in

funding, reaching $101,000 in Eaton's last year.[74] The increased funding provided for 38 employees compared to 3 when Eaton entered office.[75]

Despite the significant increase in funding, Eaton regarded this amount as still insufficient for the Bureau to perform its necessary tasks. Eaton opined that "As a government we properly expend large amounts of money to promote . . . the sciences which especially promote the efficiency of instruments of war." But he asked rhetorically: "Can we as a people of liberty, whose institutions we claim depend solely upon the free, intelligent, virtuous choice of the people, not afford to expend $20,000 outside of the regular clerical work of this Office for the promotion of the science of education, our progress in which determines the progress in every other science and every other art?"[76]

Although the Bureau never received the funding Eaton deemed necessary, his term of office must be judged as highly successful, and he rightly deserves education historian Glenn Smith's evaluation as "one of the half-dozen most significant educators of the 19th century."[77] Eaton entered office when the Bureau's survival was in peril, and he not only gave it

permanence but presided over a very substantial physical expansion. Not only did the Bureau become larger, but it engaged in a number of endeavors of long term significance. In the process, the Bureau gained prestige both at home and abroad.[78]

Certainly, Eaton's successes must be contrasted with Barnard's difficulties in office--a contrast that had much to do with the different capabilities of the two individuals.[79] Barnard was a great scholar and visionary, but Eaton was far more adept at achieving concrete goals and generating favorable publicity and support for the Bureau. Donald Warren in his highly-acclaimed To Enforce Education: A History of the Founding Years of the United States Office of Education recognizes Eaton's achievements but also offers a caveat. Warren contends that "It was John Eaton who initiated this focusing of the agency's function, emphasizing the collection and dissemination of school statistics to such an extent that the phrase became a definition of the bureau itself."[80] In essence, Warren implies that Eaton, in the process of carving out a concrete role for the Bureau, sacrificed its potential for broader activity.

Warren's criticism seems unfounded. It downplays the limitations under which Eaton had to operate: the 1867

legislation created an information office with no powers of enforcement.[81] Furthermore, while it is true that Eaton's bureau was primarily an information office, it was not simply disseminating undigested, neutral facts, but was consciously putting forth the ideology of the nineteenth century advocates of the public schools.[82] This promotional effort was exactly what Barnard and other advocates of public education originally had in mind regarding a federal education office. And this indirect, ideological approach was largely successful. By the turn of the new century the values of the public school reformers had gained cultural hegemony in all sections of the United States. The United States Bureau of Education contributed to this success, although to what extent cannot be accurately assessed. Moreover, Eaton even attempted to transcend this informational function in his unsuccessful effort to establish federal aid to education, and in his successful effort to have the Bureau direct schools in Alaska.

In sum, Eaton was neither a visionary nor an original thinker; his views reflected the conventional wisdom of educators of his time. His great strength was in the realm of action. In fleshing out a role for the fledgling Bureau of Education, Eaton

skillfully transformed the dreams of Barnard and other educational reformers into concrete reality. In so doing, Eaton helped to forge the type of educational system, with its aspects of both uniformity and diversity, that has gained dominance in the United States.

1.Sometimes the last phrase of this section of the law--"and otherwise promote the cause of education throughout the country"--has been misread as if it were a separate and distinct function, thus giving the federal education agency very broad powers--that it could do anything to promote the general cause of education. Correct reading of the words of the whole section of this law clearly show that general promotion of education was not a separate function. The phrase "otherwise promote the cause of education" is grammatically a modifying and restrictive clause. It defines the kind of information that the federal Department of Education was to diffuse. In short, Congress had mandated that the Department was not simply to diffuse any type of information, but only that type of information which aided the American people in establishing and maintaining efficient school systems and which promoted the cause of education. See Joseph Newton Rodeheaver, "The Relation of the Federal Government to Civic Education," (Ed.D. diss., Harvard University, 1951), 171-80.

2.Donald R. Warren, To Enforce Education: A History of the Founding Years of the United States Office of Education (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1974), 71-91.

3.Warren, Enforce Education, 122-150.

4.Ibid., 151-54; Leonard Glenn Smith, "John Eaton, Educator (1829-1906)," School and Society 97 (February 1969): 108-109; Leonard Glenn Smith, "A History of the United States Office of Education," (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1967): 47-50; James T. Currie, "Schools for the Freedmen," American Education 17 (June 1981): 28-32.

5.Warren, Enforce Education, 151-54; Smith, "Eaton," 109; Smith, "History," 50-52.

6.Donald R. Warren, "The United States Office of Education: A History of the Founding Years," (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1968), 379.

7.Report of the Commissioner of Education Made to the Secretary of the Interior for the Year 1870, with Accompanying Papers (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1870), 5.

8.Warren, Enforce Education, 155; Smith, "History," 54; Rodeheaver, 86.

9.Warren, "U.S. Office of Education," 397; Rodeheaver, 93.

10.Smith, "History," 56-57.

11.Charles Warren, Answers to Inquiries About the U.S. Bureau of Education: Its Work and History (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883), 23.

12.Warren, "U.S. Office of Education," 353, 359.

13.For materials published during Eaton's tenure of office, see: List of Publications of the United States Bureau of Education, 1867-1910, United States Bureau of Education, Bulletin, 1910, No. 3, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910).

14.Report of the Commissioner, 1870, 1.

15.Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1884-'85 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1886), VI.

16.Ibid., CCCXV.

17.Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1873 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879), CXXXIV.

18.Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1877 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1879), CXXXIV.

19.U.S. Bureau of Education, Articles Exhibited at the Southern Exposition of 1884 at Louisville, Ky. from the U.S. Bureau of Education (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1884); U.S. Bureau of Education, Suggestions Respecting the Education Exhibit at the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, U.S. Bureau of Education, Circular No. 5, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984); Smith, "History," 61.

20.Warren, "U.S. Office of Education," 394-95; Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1883-'84 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885), VII.

21.Joseph R. Sakas, "Role of United States Commissioner of Education in the Field of International Education, 1867-1906," (Ph.D. diss., Peabody College for Teachers of Vanderbilt University, 1967), 146.

22.Report of the Commissioner, 1870, 30.

23.Smith, "History," 61.

24.Sakas, 189; Report of the Commissioner for the Year 1878 (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1880), CLVIII. France was then making a major effort to modernize its schools after its ignominious defeat in the Franco-Prussian War--a defeat widely attributed to German superiority in science and technology. See Joseph N. Moody, French Education Since Napoleon (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1978), 88-89.

25.Report of the Commissioner, 1870, 9.

26.Eaton had earlier promoted libraries while superintendent of schools in Tennessee. Francis Miksa, "The Making of the 1876 Special Report on Public Libraries," Journal of Library History 8 (January 1973):33.

27.Miksa, "Making of the 1876 Special Report," 33; U.S. Bureau of Education, Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1874 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1875), XCI.

28.Sister M. Anne John O'Loughlin, "The Emergence of American Librarianship: A Study of Influences Evident in 1876," (D.L.S. diss., Columbia University, 1971), 140-41.

29.Remuneration proved difficult. Due to the extensive length of many articles, the Bureau had the funds to pay only about one half the originally promised rate. Miksa, "Making of the 1876 Special Report," 37.

30.O'Loughlin, 147-149.

31.Miksa, "Making of the 1876 Special Report," 35.

32.Clark A. Elliott, "The United States Bureau of Education: Its Role in Library History, 1876," in Library History Seminar No. 3, Proceedings, ed. Martha Jane K. Zachert, Journal of Library History, 1968, 106-107.

33.Miksa, "Making of the 1876 Special Report," 36.

34.Elliott, 107.

35.O'Loughlin, 154.

36.Ibid., 164.

37.Ibid., 157.

38.Miksa, "Making of the 1876 Special Report," 37; In an article on library literature written in the 1940s, Jesse H. Shera would conclude: "Neither before nor since has American librarianship produced so nearly complete a survey of the state of professional knowledge." "The Literature of American Library History," Library Quarterly 15 (January 1945): 9.

39.O'Loughlin, 151.

40.American Library Journal 1 (September 30, 1876): 14, quoted in Elizabeth W. Stone, American Library Development, 1600-1899 (New York: H.W. Wilson Company, 1977), 255.

41.Chicago Tribune, November 25, 1876, 9, quoted in Arthur P. Young, "Reception of the 1876 Report on Public Libraries," Journal of Library History 12 (Winter 1977): 55.

42.Young, 55; Other favorable comments on the special library report are listed in Warren, Answers, 23. For example, the noted historian Francis Parkman asserted: "After all our national boasting, popular education is very far from what it must be if we are to stand high among the nations, and this book is full of

suggestions as to the true methods of fulfilling our national destiny."

43.Bibliotheca Sacra 34 (January 1877): 207, quoted in Young, 54.

44.Francis L. Miksa, "Eaton, John," ALA World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Services, 2nd ed., (Chicago: American Library Association, 1986), 259; Miksa, "Eaton, John (1829-1906)," Dictionary of American Library Biography (Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1978), 156-57.

45.The outlook of the public school reformers is discussed in the following works: Diane Ravitch, The Revisionists Revised: A Critique of the Radical Attack on the Schools (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 1-72; Merle Curti, The Social Ideas of American Educators (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1935), 203-60; Charles Leslie Glenn, Jr., The Myth of the Common School (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 86-178, 236.

46.Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1876 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1878), VII.

47.According to Andy Green in Education and State Formation: The Rise of Education Systems in England, France and the USA (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 201, education in America was "significant in the development of national consciousness and in reproducing the hegemony of those republican ideologies on which the state rested." Similarly, Glenn (p. 236) holds that the educational reformers saw the public school as "the most powerful possible means of forming the attitudes, loyalties, and beliefs of the next generation and thus of 'molding citizens' to a common pattern." Eaton's educational views appear to fit into this category.

48.Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1881 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883), XLII.

49.Revisionist historians have equated public education in the United States with social control. As Ravitch (p. 29) writes about the different schools of historians of education: "Where

liberals had argued that the spread of public schooling was social progress, radicals saw the public school as a weapon of social control and indoctrination."

50.Report of the Commissioner, 1876, XIII.

51.Warren, Enforce Education, 59-60.

52.Report of the Commissioner, 1871, 5.

53.Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1900-1901 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902), 433.

54.Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1877 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880), VIII.

55.Report of the Commissioner, 1870, 52-53; The pro-capitalistic views of nineteenth century educators are emphasized by Curti, 203-60.

56.Report of the Commissioner, 1870, 52.

57.Ibid., 49.

58.Report of the Commissioner, 1871, 5.

59.Ibid., 5.

60.Ibid., 5.

61.Ibid., 7.

62.For the efforts in Congress to legislate aid for education during the latter half of the nineteenth century, see: Gordon C. Lee, "The Struggle for Federal Aid. First Phase. A History of the Attempts to Obtain Federal Aid for the Common Schools, 1870-1890," (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1950).

63.Report of the Commissioner, 1871, 9.

64.Warren, "U.S. Office of Education," 396; For the history of this proposed legislation, see Lee.

65.Smith, "History," 62-63.

66.Report of the Commissioner, 1870, 61.

67.Report of the Commissioner, 1871, 18.

68. Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1882-'83 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1884), XLVI.

69.Victor William Hennigsen, III, "Reading, Writing and Reindeer: The Development of Federal Education in Alaska, 1877-1920," (Ed.D., diss., Harvard University, 1987), 48.

70.Report of the Commissioner, 1884-'85, CCCXVII.

71.Smith, "History," 185-93.

72.Ibid., 57.

73.Smith, "Eaton," 111.

74.Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year Ended June 30, 1907,I, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908), 35-36.

75.Report of the Commissioner, 1884-'85, CCCXV.

76.Ibid., CCCXVI.

77.Smith, "Eaton," 109.

78.Smith, "History," 57.

79.For Barnard's difficulties as Commissioner, see: Warren, Enforce Education, 110-21, 147-48.

80.Warren, Enforce Education, 163; Warren titles his chapter on Eaton's tenure of office: "A Federal School Bureaucracy: Permanence at a Price."

81.Warren, Enforce Education, 86-87.

82.As early as Horace Mann, education reformers realized the power of information. Glenn writes (p. 123): "Mann's requests for information, and the use of the information he received, were in some respects the key elements of his influence over the development of the common school."